



Local School District NIMAS Textbook Adoption/Purchase Guidance

Last Updated March 17, 2009

The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) included a requirement that students who are visually impaired and print disabled due to physical and/or reading based learning disabilities receive their textbooks and core instructional materials in specialized formats at the same time as their non-disabled peers.

The 2006 regulations implementing the 2004 IDEA include directions on how states and local districts are to respond to this legislation. The two sections of this legislation are the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC). Providing accessible formats in a timely manner is not a new requirement. No statutory requirement is placed on publishers. The new NIMAS process will improve this process for the students covered under these regulations.

The NIMAS establishes standards to be used by textbook publishers to prepare electronic files of textbooks, which can be converted to specialized formats. Specialized formats means Braille, Audio, Large Print, Text to Speech or Digital Text, which can be used by students who are blind, vision impaired, physically disabled, and reading disabled. The NIMAC's duties are to receive and maintain a catalog of these electronic files from the publishers.

A critical step in the whole process is the request from local school districts to submit NIMAS filesets to the NIMAC when a textbook is purchased. Note that when local districts select not to implement such procedures, they remain fully responsible for ensuring that accessible instructional materials are provided to students with print disabilities in a timely manner.

It is recommended that local school districts require publishers to send NIMAS filesets to the NIMAC. Note that there is no additional charge to the local school districts. The following paragraph may be inserted in textbook purchasing contracts.

By agreeing to deliver the materials marked with "NIMAS" on this contract or purchase order, the publisher agrees to prepare and submit, on or before ____/____/____ a NIMAS fileset to the NIMAC that complies with the terms and procedures set forth by the NIMAC. Should the vendor be a distributor of the materials and not the publisher, the distributor agrees to immediately notify the publisher of its obligation to submit NIMAS filesets of the purchased products to the NIMAC. The files will be used for the production of specialized formats as permitted under the law for students with print disabilities. Please note that the delivery of print versions should not be delayed in cases where the NIMAS fileset has yet to be validated and cataloged by the NIMAC.

*For additional information about NIMAS, please refer to <http://nimas.cast.org>.
For additional information about the NIMAC, refer to <http://nimac.us>*

We would also be interested in learning about accessible versions of your instructional materials that may be available for purchase to support students with print disabilities who do not qualify for specialized formats created with files available from the NIMAC.

For further information or to obtain a complete copy of the Suggested NIMAS Purchase Order/ Contract Language document, please contact Steve Maurer at the Iowa Department of Education at 515-281-3576 or steve.maurer@iowa.gov

Definitions

BLIND OR OTHER PERSONS WITH PRINT DISABILITIES—The term 'blind or other persons with print disabilities' means children served under this Act and who may qualify in accordance with the Act entitled 'An Act to provide books for the adult blind', approved March 3, 1931 (2 U.S.C. 135a; 46 Stat. 1487) to receive books and other publications produced in specialized formats.

NATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD—The term 'National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard' means the standard established by the Secretary to be used in the preparation of electronic files suitable and used solely for efficient conversion into specialized formats.

PRINT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS—The term 'print instructional materials' means printed textbooks and related printed core materials that are written and published primarily for use in elementary school and secondary school instruction and are required by a State educational agency or local educational agency for use by students in the classroom.

SPECIALIZED FORMATS—The term 'specialized formats' has the meaning given the term in section 121(d)(3) of title 17, United States Code.

References

NIMAS and NIMAC Language within the IDEA 2004 Statute
<http://nimas.cast.org/about/idea2004>

NIMAS and NIMAC-Related IDEA 2004 Regulations
<http://nimas.cast.org/about/regulations>

NIMAS Technical Standard
<http://nimas.cast.org/about/proposal>

True AIM
<http://trueaim.iowa.gov>